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Russian Federation

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

Country Report

2004

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Report Highlights:

Russia is trying to bring its food safety and import regulations into conformity with the new general Law on Technical Regulation, but progress is slow due to ongoing government restructuring. Draft regulations presented for public consideration so far are only reorganizations of previous laws. Thus, the bulk of Russia's food safety regulations revert back to SanPiN-01 issued in 2002. Some regulations have been simplified, but some segments of Russia's system do not yet conform to international standards.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
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Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs and the Agricultural Trade Office of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Moscow, Russia for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care was taken in the preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since its preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is highly recommended that U.S. Exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their foreign customers, who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities, before any goods are shipped.

FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY.

Section I. Food Safety Laws and Regulations

Current Status

The quality and safety for all food products produced, imported, and sold in the Russian Federation are controlled by a set of sanitary epidemiological rules and regulations entitled “Hygienic Requirements for the Safety and Nutrition of Foodstuffs” (hereinafter referred to as “SanPiN-01”). SanPiN-01 was updated and prepared by the Russian Ministry of Health and the Nutrition Institute of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, and came into force on September 1, 2002.

SanPiN-01 governs the activities of all persons and legal entities involved in manufacturing, importing, and distributing foodstuffs, and also for those entities that provide retail and public food catering services. SanPiN-01 also guides the State Sanitary Epidemiological Service (“Gossanepidnadzor”), the organization engaged in food safety oversight and control. SanPiN-01 also establishes hygienic requirements for the substances and materials that come into contact with foodstuffs.

The legal status of SanPiN-01 gives the new Federal Service for Consumer Rights and Social Welfare in the Ministry of Health and Social Development the right to withdraw from trade products that do not meet official requirements.

Several other agencies have a role in food safety for domestically produced products and imports. For meat and meat products, the Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Service (FVPS) is involved in negotiating trade certificates for imported products with some input from the Ministry of Health and Social Services. For plant products (grains, oilseeds, and the like), the Grain Inspection Service currently negotiates and enforces agreements, though according to some reports, the responsibility for this issue may change in the near future as the Ministry of Agriculture continues its reorganization process. According to the new structure of the Ministry of Agriculture, the FVPS will have control over plant quarantine issues, too.

For more complete information on SanPiN-01, please see GAIN Reports RS2020 and RS2022. Additional information on general food safety and policy can be obtained at www.fas.usda.gov by searching for reports on the Russian Federation under “Trade Data” and “Attaché Reports.”

Recent Developments

The Russian Government has released draft food safety regulation documents and materials on a range of food safety issues onto their web site for public comment, but interlocutors have remarked that these documents are simply a restatement of previous regulations into the format of Russia’s general Law on Technical Regulations issued in 2003. Development and approval of these regulations is proceeding slowly, and the completion date is not yet known. In the past, public and private institutions have provided input into developing food standards, and at least the mechanism to do so is still available. In some instances, public comments and the input of various scientific research institutes has proven valuable in developing and implementing workable standards based on international guidelines.

Although the process is proceeding slowly, regulators are also attempting to move away from strict, detailed government exposed standards to the concept of producer responsibility for food safety, similar to the HACCP concept used in the United States.

As part of the Ministry of Agriculture's recent reorganization, the Russian Veterinary Service and the Plant Protection Service have been merged into one entity. Therefore, development and enforcement of food safety regulations and trade standard negotiations for both these areas will take place under a common structure.

As part of the recent reorganization of the Russian Government, the Ministry of Health is merged with Ministries involved in social issues into a Ministry of Health and Social Development, and the functions of supervision of food product safety and health-related issues are divided between the Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Consumer Rights Protection and Well-being of Population and the Federal Agency for Health and Social Development. What remains from the former SanEpidNadzor is now under the authority of the first of these two organizations.

Organic products, though not legally defined under Russian law, are gaining attention, and regulations are being developed for their production and trade.

Legal Basis for SanPiN-01

SanPiN-01 was developed based on the following Federal Laws of the Russian Federation:

"On sanitary epidemiological well-being of the population" (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 1999, #14, Article 1650),"

"On quality and safety of foodstuffs" (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 2000, #2, Article 150),"

"On radiation safety of the population" (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 1996, #3, Article 141),"

"On protection of consumers' rights" (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 1996, #3, Article 140),

"The basic legislation of the Russian Federation on protecting citizens' health" (News from the People's Deputies Congress of the Russian Federation and the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation, 1993, #33, Article 13818),

Decree of the Russian Federation Government of July 24, 2000 #554,"

"On approval of the Regulation of the State sanitary epidemiological service of the Russian Federation and the Regulation on the State sanitary epidemiological regulating" (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 2000, #31, Article 3295)."

Section II. Labeling Requirements

A. General Requirements

SanPiN-01 does not prescribe labeling format (how required label information is presented to the consumer) for food products because control over label format is a function of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade's Trade Inspection Department rather than Ministry of Health. SanPiN-01 does require the provision of information about nutrition value on food product labels. This requirement is included in SanPiN-01's "reference" attachment, which contains comparisons with international norms and data on testing methods.

Though the specific format is not regulated, the exporter must provide Russian language

labeling of each product package (such as box or bag) to sell any food product into the Russian Federation. An importer can apply labels to each package after arrival in Russia. However, this approach is less desirable, as it must be done in the customs warehouse, delaying the clearance process and increasing storage costs.

There is an exception to the mandatory package labeling requirements for small packages. The law states that if these packages are not large enough to include all required text, part of the information can be printed on a list enclosed with each unit of the product. Exporters should check with their Russian importer to make sure that labeling complies with current law.

All products sold in Russia are required to contain relevant information about the product in Russian language. It is also recommended that bulk shipments also include basic information in Russian.

Outer containers should bear the consignee's mark and port mark and should be numbered in such a way that corresponds to the packing list unless the contents can be otherwise readily identified. The contract number must be shown on the outside of containers.

Appendix III below contains the list of the specific information that must be on the label.

B. Requirements Specific to Nutritional Labeling

In an attachment, SanPiN-01 lays out nutritious value requirements for 17 aggregated groups of processed meat, poultry, and dairy and fish products. Nutritional value is not determined in SanPiN-01 for grain and grain products, vegetables, fruits and products, nor for sugar and confectionary products. However very detailed criteria for the nutritional value of fruit and vegetable juices are included, in part due to the public/private sector cooperation on standard development. SanPiN-01 provides separately detailed hygiene and nutritious value requirements for baby food, food for school children, and for diet food products. Energy value parameters are excluded from labeling requirements.

Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations

Packaging and containers for shipping, storing and handling food products are required to comply with the basic food safety requirements stipulated in SanPiN-01. Currently packaging requirements for food products in Russia are regulated by 169 "GOST" (Government Standards) standards for different types of packaging. According to SanPiN-01 packaging of food products should ensure food products' quality and safety through each stage of trade. For some products, such as for grains, packaging shall also meet specific phytosanitary requirements which mandate that grain and products imported into the Russian Federation in packages shall have new and air permeable packaging, per order #681 issued by the Ministry of Agriculture on September 3, 2002.

Packaging specifications are an inseparable part of every trade contract. Before the contract for food shipment is concluded, the importer should investigate and advise the exporter what the specific requirements are for each food product. Food products can be packed according with US standards, Russian standards, or by mutual agreement between the trade partners. Consumer packaging (for example, paper and carton boxes, plastic or polymer bags, bottles and cans) that comes into direct contact with food products should be certified. Certification for containers, pallets and other packaging that are not directly in contact with food products is not required.

Some food products are sensitive to air, water, and steam. Therefore, one of the most important requirements for packaging materials is gas, steam, water, fat, and aroma permeability. For instance, when packaging chilled meat it is necessary to maintain low steam permeability (to avoid moisture loss) together with specific gas permeability so meat color will be preserved. Material for vacuum packaging should have a minimum level of gas permeability. Goods should be securely packed, taking into account the nature of the goods, means of transport and likely climatic conditions.

It is obligatory to ensure that the required level of sanitary and hygienic characteristics are maintained when choosing packaging for food products. Sanitary and hygienic requirements are confirmed with a sanitary certificate for the packaging material. The sanitary hygienic requirements for packaging materials include:

- The packaging material is not made up of highly toxic substances that have cumulative characteristics (carcinogenic, mutation, allergenic etc.)
- The packaging material does not change organoleptic and physiological characteristics of food products and also does not excrete harmful substances in a quantity exceeding allowances.

Section IV. Food Additive Regulations

Basic information on food additive regulation and certification is contained in Section IX of this document.

Section V. Pesticide and other Contaminants

Russia establishes its own Maximum Allowed Limits (MALs) for pesticides and contaminants that apply to both domestically produced foodstuffs and imports, and publishes these in several official documents. In SanPiN-01, hygiene requirements and safety standards for food products are broken out by numerous parameters, including a MAL for pesticides. For each group of products there are more precise requirements.

In addition, SanPiN-01 requires that the residue level of pesticides used in primary production (for example grain or vegetable production) are monitored for each processed food product that uses those raw materials as an input. The use of officially registered pesticides and their application procedures are controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture through norms published each year in the document entitled "State Catalogue of Pesticides and Agricultural Chemicals Allowed for Use on the Territory of the Russian Federation." The Catalogue is structured by chemical, and gives norms of application, time of application, and treated pests and weeds for each chemical and brand name. Chemicals not listed in the catalogue cannot be used, and no residues in agricultural products are allowed.

Section VI. Other Regulations and Requirements

In SanPiN-01, changes in hygiene norms for product groups are not very significant, and in many cases, tests are unified or the number of obligatory parameters is decreased.

Plant Products:

Phytosanitary regulations for plant and plant-based food products cover all imports. The main regulations are outlined in the Federal Law on Plant Quarantine of July 15, 2000, and the Order of the Ministry of Agriculture of September 3, 2002 #681 "On Approving the Rules for Providing Plant Quarantine at Importing, Storing, Transporting, Processing and Utilizing

Grain and Products Imported into the Russian Federation Territory for Use as Food, Feeds, or for Processing (GAIN report #RS2035). Further, several Ministry of Agriculture instructions such as the “List of Quarantine Pests, Plant Diseases and Weeds which have Quarantine Importance for the Russian Federation (1998)” and “Terms of Use of Imported and Domestic Quarantine Grain and Products, and List of Enterprises (1999)”, regulate trade.

Section VII. Other Specific Standards

Trade of biotechnology products remains an important issue in Russia, and some field crops are now registered. Post will provide reporting on these and other standards and regulations as they are released by the Russian authorities. Additional information can be obtained in GAINs report RS4027.

Section VIII. Copyright and Trademark Laws

In December 2002, President Putin signed extensive amendments to the Russian Federation’s Law on Trademarks, Service Marks and Labeling of Origin of Goods. According to statements made at that time, the amendments are designed to accelerate Russia’s integration into the global economy and its admission to the WTO. The Law is said to ensure better protection of well-known trademarks, broadly defines “counterfeit” for the first time, and also provides for physical destruction of seized counterfeit goods. The law also implements mechanisms to counter bad faith registrations of Intellectual Property (IP) objects and trademark infringements.

President Putin has prepared a draft law of extensive amendments to “The Law on Copyright and Neighboring Rights” approved by the State Duma on June 2004. When passed, portions of the law relevant to food and agricultural products trade will be reported.

Section IX. Import Procedures

Russia’s Meat and Poultry Import Procedures

The process for importing meat or meat products involves two main steps: (1) Safety, Phytosanitary, and Veterinary Clearance; and (2) Customs Clearance.

(Note: Although this information is considered accurate at the time of its publication, exporters should confirm the exact import requirements for individual products prior to shipment. Also, there may be specific import requirements for certain products, which are not addressed within this report. The following documentation is **required**. An explanation on these documents will be given below. Lastly, the official language of the system is **Russian** and **all documents must be submitted in Russian**.)

To get permission to import a meat product, an importer must go through a number of steps:

First, the importer gets permission from veterinary authorities at the local, regional, and central levels. Typically, he goes to local veterinary authorities and presents a letter indicating that he wants to import meat. Local veterinarians forward his request to central veterinary authorities in Moscow who issue notification/permission to border veterinary authorities (this process takes about one week). The permission sent to border veterinary authorities indicates specific volumes and origin of meat that the importer will be allowed bring into the country. Although this process is automatic, the importer has to go through it

annually, or each time he wants to increase his meat import allotment, or change the type of meat that he wants to import.

When a shipment arrives, the importer must present to customs documentation from the bank that he has deposited money for duties and taxes, according to value of the shipment. In order to get bank documentation for customs release of the meat, the importer must present business registration, a contract with the supplier, and veterinary documentation that he has permission to import meat. With each shipment, the importer must present each of the following to border veterinary authorities in order to get an internal veterinary certificate that customs authorities will then accept and allow to clear the customs point:

1. Delivery Contract, Bills of Lading, Invoice, Packing List, and Customs Declaration. These documents include the following information: a contract between buyer and supplier indicating the origin, volume, arrival date, and value of shipment; location where each shipment will be stored; location of processing plant or wholesaler to receive the shipment; packing list; cargo plan indicating how vessel is loaded (on pallets, etc.); and an export declaration that indicates to Customs the value of the cargo
2. Veterinary Certificates
3. Hygiene Certificate
4. Safety Certificate
5. Certification of Conformity
6. Certificate of Origin
7. Manufacturer's Certificate of Quality

Section 1. Shipping Documents. These are the normal shipping documents that would be required of any importing country. In addition to the information necessary above, it should contain the following information:

- The country and address of the producer (The company name may be in Latin letters)
- The weight and volume of the product
- A list of the main ingredients, including food additives
- Nutritional information
- Storage conditions for products that have a limited storage life or that require special storage conditions
- The length of storage possible (This should include the date of production and the use by date)
- Method of preparation
- Recommendations for use
- Conditions for use, including avoidance during certain types of illness

Section 2: Veterinary Certificates: USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issues veterinary certificates for exports of U.S. meat and meat products. The FSIS document will state that the product meets Russian veterinary requirements. In the case of pork and poultry meat, the FSIS document will also state that the product comes from a U.S. facility that is authorized to export to Russia.

The importer must also go through the process mentioned above in order to obtain veterinary import permission from the Russian Veterinary Service. If the importer is importing meat products under the tariff codes 0201, 0202, or 0207, additional steps are required. The importer must hold a special license that allows for a specific volume of imports during the calendar year. Without this license, the importer must pay an out-of-

quota duty for beef and pork that is at least three times the in-quota duty. Poultry imports are not allowed without this import license.

Section 4: The Hygiene Certificate. This document is issued by the local department of the State Committee on Sanitation and Epidemic Control (Goskomsanepidemnadzor). It takes 3 - 5 days and 3 - 4 kg of the product for this testing procedure. The Hygiene Certificate is the only Russian certificate that could be issued for the entire contract, rather than for each consignment of the product. A Manufacturer's Certificate of Quality is necessary to receive the Hygiene Certificate for the contract.

This is required for all food products, additives, and preservatives. Goskomsanepidemnadzor issues the certificates for children's foods, food additives, non-traditional forms of unprocessed food, as well as food products purchased under international agreements. Goskomsanepidemnadzor issues the Hygiene (Sanitary) Certificates through its Moscow certification laboratories and is also responsible for all other sanitary and hygiene regulations. This committee also works closely with the Institute of Nutrition, which operates under the supervision of the Russian Federation's Academy of Medical Science. The Hygiene Certificate can also be handled through the U.S. testing centers. Enquiries about pre-certification can be made to Control Union Inspection, Inc. or to the U.S. Testing Company, Inc, of New Jersey, a subsidiary of SGS. These firms can also give further information relating to certification necessary to conform to import requirements and the costs of testing. The advantage of obtaining the Certificate of Hygiene abroad is that testing in Russia can take up to two months or more.

Section 3. The Certificate of Safety. This certificate is issued by the State Standards Committee of Russia ("GOSSTANDART "). It may take 5 - 7 days and about 5 kg of samples to complete the testing. The Certificate of Safety is based on the Hygiene Certificate and tests of the samples made by the Center of Standardization.

Section 4: Certificate of Conformity Full certification to standards set by GOSSTANDART is mandatory for importing any product. The most important certification needed for exporting product into Russia is the Certification of Conformity (called GOST-R). The Russian Research Institute for Certification (VNIIS) issues the Certificate of Conformity. The testing is done by the Testing and Certification Center (Rostest), which provides a full range of quality control and inspection facilities in Russia.

However, the Certificate of Conformity can also be issued in the United States. Enquiries about pre-certification can be made to Control Union Inspection, Inc. or to the U.S. Testing Company, Inc, of New Jersey, a subsidiary of SGS. These firms can also give further information relating to certification necessary to conform to import requirements and the costs of testing.

Section 6: Certificate of Origin: This certificate is used to determine tariffs. Certificates can be obtained from local issued by the local Department of the State Sanitary Epidemiological Inspection, which also issues the Hygiene Certificate.

Tips:

All the Certificates are being processed at the same time so, in theory, the certification process takes 7 - 10 days.

It is important to be sure that all four certificates are issued for each consignment of the product. Officially, an amount of product is called one consignment if it satisfies the following requirements:

- it is produced at one plant or processing facility
- the month of processing is the same for the entire amount,
- it all came by one transportation unit (vessel, train, truck, etc.).

If there are several consignments of the product coming as one shipment (for example some part of the product was produced in April, some in May), these consignments should be separately described in the Packing List and in each of the Certificates.

Russian Regulatory Bodies

Below is a list of the most important Russian regulatory agencies involved in food imports. Their coordinates can be found at the end of this appendix.

Federal Service for Technical Regulation and Metrology (former Gosstandart) is the national body for the certification of goods. A schedule of goods that are subject to mandatory certification is published and includes foodstuffs and beverages, whether of local or imported origin. Gosstandart has been transformed into two institutions as part of the recent administrative reform. The development of standards and technical regulations is in the authority of the Department of Technical Regulation in the Ministry of Industry and Energy, while the functions of standardization and supervision over standards are left in the Federal Service for Technical regulation and Metrology (replaced Gosstandart) of the Ministry of Industry and Energy.

The Russian Research Institute for Certification (VNIIS) issues the Certificate of Conformity.

The Russian Testing and Certification Center (ROSTEST) provides a full range of quality control and inspection facilities in Russia.

Goskomsanepidemnadzor is the part of the Federal Service on Sanitation and Epidemic Control which is responsible for sanitary and hygiene regulations.

Specific Import Regulations: Meat and Poultry

The Russian veterinary authorities determine which meat and poultry products may be imported into Russia and the import requirements for these products.

Eligible Products

The following products are eligible for export from the United States to Russia: Poultry and poultry products, beef and products, pork and pork products, horsemeat, and bison meat. Processed meat products intended for export to Russia must comply with USDA standards and regulations. Pork and poultry products must come from only eligible plants. These plants are listed on the FSIS website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm>

Ineligible Products

The following meat products are not eligible for export from the United States to Russia: ground red meat packaged in bulk form or in meat patties; beef and beef products; consumer size packages of ground poultry, mechanically deboned poultry meat, and giblets; poultry products originating from birds grown in selected counties in states affected by an outbreak of laryngotracheitis or Avian Influenza. As the list of ineligible products changes often, please contact the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Technical Service Center, Omaha, Nebraska. Tel. (402)221-7400 Fax (402) 418-8914 for updated information

regarding disease status in restricted regions. Contact the Export Coordination Division of FSIS at tel. (202)501-6022 or by fax at (202) 501-6929 for up-to-date requirements. The latest export requirements can also be found on the FSIS Internet site: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/Russia.htm>

Veterinary Certificates

All meat and poultry products shipped from the United States require USDA/FSIS Form 9060-5--Export Certificate of Wholesomeness. In addition to this certificate, the following certificates are required:

Raw pork, including bacon and pork for retail sale. FSIS Form 9450-3(8/97) — Veterinary Certificate for Pork Meat Exported to the Russian Federation.

Pork casings. FSIS Form 9450-6 (7/95) — Veterinary Certificate for Pork Intestine Raw Material, Exported Into the Russia Federation.

Poultry. FSIS Form 9450-4(3/96) — Veterinary Certificate for Poultry Meat Exported into the Russian Federation.

Raw beef. FSIS Form 9450-5 (6/94) — Veterinary Certificate for Beef Meat Exported into the Russian Federation.

Fully cooked meat and poultry products and heat-treated but not fully cooked meat products. FSIS Form 9450-7 (7/95) — Veterinary Certificate for Prepared Meat Products Exported into the Russian Federation.

All certificates accompanying product into the Russian Federation must be signed by a FSIS veterinarian. Contact FSIS, Technical Service Center, Export Division (402) 221-7400 for guidance in completing the proper documents correctly.

Processing/Packing Plant Certification

Poultry

All establishments which process or store raw poultry intended for export to the Russian Federation must be reviewed by an official of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture and included on the approved plant list for raw poultry prior to being eligible to export products to Russia. Establishments are inspected at their own expense. The requirements for these establishments are outlined in "The US-Russia Criteria for Processing and Refrigeration Facilities Exporting Poultry to the Russian Federation". For additional information on plant inspection, copies of inspection criteria and approved plant list please contact FSIS, Technical Service Center, Export Division (402) 221-7400. The current list of eligible plants is on the FSIS website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm>

Pork

All establishments which process or store raw pork intended for export to the Russian Federation must be reviewed by an official of the Russian Ministry of Agriculture and included on the approved plant list for raw pork prior to being eligible to export products to Russia. Plants are inspected at their own expense. For additional information on plant inspection, copies of inspection criteria and approved plant list, please contact FSIS, Technical Service Center, Export Division (402) 221-7400. The current list of eligible plants is on the FSIS website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm>

Other Meat Products

Fully cooked pork products, pork casings, beef and beef products, fully cooked poultry products, and heat-treated but not fully cooked poultry products can originate from any federally inspected facility.

2003 Russian Meat and Poultry Import Regulations

Type of Product		USA
Pork	for processing	AP
	for retail trade	AP
Beef	Bone-in	PR
	Boneless	PR
Trimming	Beef	PR
	Pork	IN
Offal	Beef	PR
	Pork	AP
Poultry	Chicken	AP
	Turkey	AP
Ground	Beef	PR
	Pork	AP
Poultry MDM		AP
Processed meat		AL
Live animals		AL

Abbreviations:

Import prohibited - PR

Import allowed - AL

Import allowed only for processing

Import allowed only from plants approved by Russian Veterinary

Import allowed under control of Russian veterinary specialists

Russia's Grains and Oilseed Import Procedures

Grain Inspection issues certificates for import of grains, macaroni products and cereals. Certification process takes 3 - 5 days and requires up to 12 kg of samples for the tests. The samples are usually taken from different parts of the shipment (such as boxes or containers).

Grains and oilseeds and their products shall have an appropriate phytosanitary certificate from the exporting country, per phytosanitary regulations for imported grains and oilseeds, and their products are stipulated in the Order #681. The Russian Grain Inspection Service issues certificates for import of grain, macaroni products and cereals based on conformity of these products with Russian standards.

As a result of the government reorganization mentioned above, the future of the Grain Inspection Service has not yet been determined in the new administrative structure. Some analysts believe that it is not likely to continue as an independent agency.

Customs Payments

For customs clearance of imported food products, the following payments should be made to the customs office:

- 1) 0.1% of the customs cost of the product in rubles
- 2) 0.05% of the customs cost of the product in foreign currency
- 3) Customs duty
- 4) Value added tax (VAT): calculated based on the sum of customs cost of the product plus customs duty

Customs clearance is usually done by the customs office at destination. This procedure takes 2 - 4 days. All customs documentation should be written in Russian. Customs duties, fees, VAT are usually paid in advance in order not to delay the clearance procedure. Customs duties, fees and taxes depend on the type of the product and are calculated based on customs cost of the product, i.e.: cost of the product plus transportation expenses. The customs cost of the product could not be less than the "acceptable price" determined by the customs authorities.

Potential Import Problems to Avoid

Exporting products into Russia can be a daunting task for the inexperienced US exporter. Even more experienced US exporters encounter problems and delays due to changes in Russian import requirements or customs regulations. This is why it is always a good business practice to check with your Russian importer and other sources to make sure your shipment has all the necessary documentation prior to shipment. Some of the more common problems to avoid include incorrectly completed documents and forms; required documents and certificates missing or unavailable; price discrepancies when the invoice price is at odds with Russian customs officials' price determination; meat or poultry product shipped from a packing plant or facility not certified by Russian veterinary officials; and duties, tariffs and VAT not paid in advance delaying the shipment. Customs duties and VAT must be paid before the product will be cleared by Russian customs authorities unless product is shipped, under seal, to a Russian, bonded, customs-approved warehouse.

Appendix I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts

Federal Service for Technical Regulation and Metrology (former Gosstandart)
Moscow, Leninsky prospekt, 9
tel. 7 (095) 230-13-20
tel. 7 (095) 237-54-68, fax 7 (095) 237-6231

Federal Service for Consumer Rights and Social Welfare
Moscow, Vadkovskiy per. 18/20
tel. 7 (095) 973-2748, fax. 7 (095) 200-0212, 258-4497
tel. 7 (095) 973-2748, fax 7 (095) 200-0212
tel. 7 (095) 973-2666, 973-1803, 973-2674, fax 7 (095) 258-4497

All-Russian Scientific-Research Institute for Certification (VNIIS)
Moscow, Elektricheskiy per. 3
Boris Krutov, Head of Section

tel. 7 (095) 253-3580, fax 7 (095) 253-3360

“Rostest - Moskva”, Russian Center for Test and Certification, GOSSTANDART, RF
31, Nakhimovsky prospect, 117418, Moscow, RF
Zlatkovich Lev Arnoldovich, General Director First Deputy
tel. 7 (095) 129-3200, fax 7 (095) 124-9966

Appendix II. Other Import Specialist Contacts

Russian Federation web sites include:

Ministry of Health:

http://www.government.ru/institutions/ministries/details.html?he_id=143

Ministry of Agriculture:

http://www.government.ru/institutions/ministries/details.html?he_id=153

Ministry of Economic Development and Trade

http://www.government.ru/institutions/ministries/details.html?he_id=157

Appendix III. Labeling information

1. Name of the product
2. Type, grade or category of the product
3. Name, country, address of producer, packer, exporter and importer of the product
4. Weight (net and gross) or volume of the product
5. Nutritional quality of the product
6. Ingredients
7. Date of processing
8. Storage conditions
9. Shelf-life of the product
10. Conformity stamp (RST) and certification code

GOST standards can be found at the Library for GOSTs or All-Russian Standardization Fund, or purchased at specialized store on GOSTs located in Moscow.